

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ALEXAN 00388 230817Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----230903Z 002433 /10
R 230747Z MAY 77
FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0779
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALEXANDRIA 0388

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD, BTRA, EG, US
SUBJECT: ARAB BOYCOTT - COCA COLA

REF: STATE 102171

FOLLOWING IS FROM AMBASSADOR IN ALEXANDRIA:

1. AS REPORTED FROM CAIRO (REFERNECE NOT AVAILABLE HERE), I MET LAST WEEK WITH SAM AYOUB OF COCA COLA AND ASSURED HIM I WOULD ASK FAHMY TO RECEIVE AYOUB LATER THIS MONTH. I DID SO LAST EVENING AND ALSO GAVE FAMY LETTER AYOUB HAD LEFT WITH ME.
2. FAHMY READ THE LETTER, BUT SAID HE SAW NO NEED TO MEET WITH AYOUB. (HE HAD JUST A FEW MINUTES EARLIER SHOWN SIMILAR SENSITIVITY ABOUT MEETING WITH SHAKER KHAYATT RE XEROX". HE HAD ALREADY MET WITH COKE CHARIMAN PAUL AUSTIN DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO EGYPT. ANYWAY, FAHMY ARGUED, AYOUB HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH EGYPTIAN BOYCOTT OFFICIALS AND THIS COMPLICATED MFA PROBLEM. I TOLD HIM AYOUB HAD DONE SO BECAUSE MINSTATE MOHAMED RIAD WOULD NOT RECEIVE HIM AND VARIOUS OTHER GOE CONTACTS HAD THEREFORE ADVISED AYOUB TO SEE THE BOYCOTT PEOPLE. AYOUB WAS CERTAINLY NOT TRYING TO GO AROUND FAHMY'S BACK IN DOING SO, BUT HAD HAD TO DO SOMETHING.

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3. I RECALLED THAT FAHMY HIMSELF HAD RECENTLY TOLD ME THAT THERE WAS STILL ONE OUTSTANDING ISSUE WITH THE COKE PROJECT. I HAD MENTIONED THAT COMMENT TO AYOUB, WHO WAS PUZZLED. AYOUB HAD UNDERSTOOD ALL OUTSTANDING ISSUES WERE RESOLVED DURING AUSTIN'S VISIT. AMONG OTHER THINGS, AYOUB WANTED SUCH A MEETING TO CLARIFY WHAT THIS OUTSTANDING ISSUE MIGHT BE. FAHMY CLAIMED HE COULD NOT REMEMBER THE ISSUE INVOLVED, BUT SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO IT.

4. ALTHOUGH I PRESSED FAHMY SEVERAL TIMES, HE DECLINED TO MEET WITH AYOUB. HE SAID HE WOULD MEET WITH COKE CHAIRMAN AUSTIN, BUT WITH NOONE ELSE.

5. PLEASE PASS ABOVE TO AYOUB WITH MY RECOMMENDATION THAT SUTIN SEND TELEGRAM TO FAHMY ASKING HIM TO RECEIVE AYOUB AS HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE. THIS MIGHT HELP DE-RIGIDIFY FAHMY. HOWEVER, HE SEEMS TO BE AFRAID THESE DAYS THAT MEETING WITH CERTAIN BOYCOTTED AMERICAN COMPANY OFFICIALS, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF ARAB ORIGIN, WILL SUBJECT HIM TO CHARGES OF HAVING TAKEN BRIBES FOR PERMITTING COMPANY TO OPERATE IN EGYPT. HE ALSO TAKES POSITION THAT SINCE EGYPTIAN BOYCOTT AUTHORITIES HAVE NOW BECOME ENGAGED IN COKE PROJECT, HE PREFERS TO DISENGAGE -- AT LEAST FOR NOW. HOWEVER, I SEE NO SIGN OF ANY SLACKENING OF GOE, INCLUDING FAHMY'S INTEREST IN APPROVING COKE PROJECT.

6. PLEASE REPLY TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO REPORTED AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA. CHASE

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